8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
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water but is given an herbal purgative. Her hair is cut short. Generally 531
several of her relatives stay around the door of the hut, and strangers
and men with an eye to matrimony may look in. During this period the
girl is taught the duties of married life and such skills as weaving,
sewing, and making hammocks. When she emerges, stout and bleached,
a special festival is held, when she resumes her ornaments and puts on
the adult clothes that she has made during her confinement. She is now
considered marriageable. The length of her confinement depends on
her status, though theoretically it lasts until her hair again reaches the [554
nape of her neck. Poor girls are secluded only a few weeks, rich girls 556]
up to 2 years.

Sexual life and marriage.—Little is known about the sexual life of 536
the *Goajiro*. A certain amount of promiscuous love making occurs among
the young people at the biweekly festivals. Dances also provide an op-
portunity for sexual advances.

There are some male transvestites who carry on only female activities 538
and are ridiculed by the men.

When a man desires to marry he sends his father or uncle as inter- 554
mediary, then pays a bride price which has been set by the girl's relatives. 583
The payment is usually in cattle, but goats, pearls, liquor, cotton cloth, 602
and gold ornaments also are used. The father retains the purchase price
only when his first daughter marries; the income of subsequent marriages
goes to the girl's senior maternal uncles. The mother also receives part
of the income. A son obtains the cattle for the bride payment from
the increase of his father's herds.

Intermarriage between the sibs is frequent, and many of the *Goajiro* 582
give their daughters to "civilizados" from Maracaibo and Rio Hacha,
who pay higher prices and find such a tie with the Indians useful in their
trading relations.

The marriage ceremony consists of a series of feasts and exchanges of 585
presents between the two families. The wedding night is spent at the [581
rancheria of the bride's mother, but the nuptial hammock (specially
woven by the female relatives of the bride) is hung from a tree some dis-
tance away from the house. For a period of days and even months the
bridegroom leaves his bride at dawn and returns only after sunset. In [604
this way the groom shows respect to his mother-in-law.

Polygyny is general. The number of wives depends on the economic 595
status of the husband, some men having as many as 20. Each wife lives
in her own house, where her husband occasionally visits her. The man,
as head of the polygynous household, supervises the daily slaughter of [592
animals and the distribution of meat and corn to each household accord-
ing to the number of its members.

If a wife shirks her domestic duties she may be divorced and her hus- 586
band may claim the return of the bride price cattle, plus their increase and